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The Proper Parent For the Peace Corps

To the Editor:

Your Nov. 1 news story "Peace Corps Asks a Review of Cuts" contained a number of inaccuracies on the issue of the Peace Corps' separation from the Action agency.

The article stated that there have been moves in Congress to "restore the independence of the Peace Corps." But the Peace Corps has never been independent. From 1961 to 1971 it was under the State Department; in 1971 it became a part of Action.

The article also declared that the "Peace Corps has a strict prohibition against former intelligence agents within its ranks." This is not true. In fact, the deputy director of the Peace Corps from 1969 to 1971, Tom Houser, served in Army counterintelligence in the mid-1950's.

It is true that some supporters of separation have attacked the appointment of Tom Pauken as Action director because he served in Vietnam in military intelligence. The obvious question arises: Why is a Vietnam veteran being treated differently from a 1950's veteran with an equivalent background?

It is significant that the Reagan Administration strongly opposes the separation of the Peace Corps from Action because such a move would cost the taxpayers more money. New independent agencies always require additional funds. To create another Federal agency during a period of budget cuts makes no sense whatsoever.

DONALD THORSON
Assistant Director
for Legislative Affairs, Action
Washington, Nov. 6, 1981